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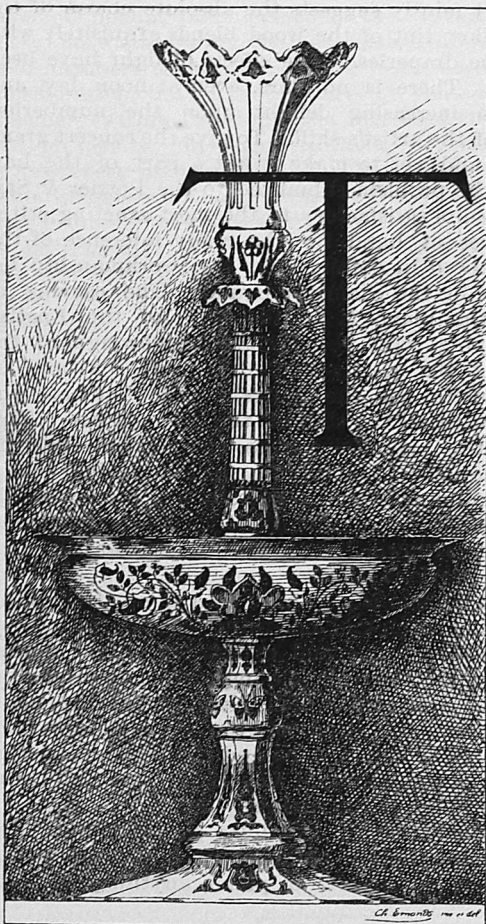
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THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.



CHINA AND TABLE WARE.

THE requirements of fashionable life demand a continual round of dinner giving, luncheon parties, high teas, and informal gathering at table, and the service necessary properly to conduct such affairs may be costly, varied, and artistic. Where this class of entertainments prevail, families of wealth and leisure often keep up an amiable rivalry regarding their table furnishings, and by constantly noting the production of elegant novelties in this line, be-

come, after judicious selection, possessed of most exquisite collections of choice wares. Many persons of taste are using china and art glass to the almost entire exclusion of silver plate, only employing the latter when necessary on account of danger of breakage by heat. The result is certainly pleasant to the eye, as a table spread with fine china and cut glass, with flowers judiciously disposed, is to many far more attractive than when plate is substituted for the brilliant glass, which is, in the majority of cases, quite as costly and altogether more uncommon.

The present season's assortment of novelties, while every way satisfactory, show but few really strikingly new ideas.

New meat and game sets are handsomely decorated with figures of deer and various game animals. The platters are large, oblong, with square ends, and are moderately deep. A vegetable dish, gravy tureen or sauce boat, or both where two kinds of sauce are served, and a dozen plates, is the usual set. There are some very elegant game sets with hand-painted birds, pheasants, grouse, woodcock and the like, with charming bits of landscape, all of the most artistic sort. These sets are shown in various colors, some of the choicest having very dark blue rims with gold decoration, which forms a charming frame for the landscape and figures in the middle.

Soup plates are somewhat smaller. There is a decided variance of taste among manufacturers; by some they are made deeper, by others they are almost as shallow as an old-fashioned breakfast plate, quite too flat for practical use. Good sense and convenience bear toward the side of deeper dishes for liquids of all sorts. There is a passing fancy just now for bouillon cups. These are bowl shaped, and about the size of an old fashioned china coffee cup. They have handles, some of the new styles handles on either side, and come with or without covers. They have saucers to match and cost from \$1 each to \$2.50 each, according to the quality and decoration. Soup tureens are either round, oblong, or square, some new ones in the latter shape being especially pretty and of graceful form. Plates show but trifling variations in style from those used last season. Among the most attractive patterns in fine goods is the Osiris, which has been illustrated in THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER, and to which additional pieces of rare beauty are continually added. A specially desirable pattern, and one which grows upon the attention, has a stamped edge and single sprays of flowers in gold and color upon the white ground. Some choice designs are shown with shaded gray foliage and sprays of delicate flowers, with raised work in fine glazing. This class of decoration appears on all pieces belonging to the set, and is very effective. There are many sizes of plates in general use, and as it is customary with some families to use a different sort for each course, the assortment of plates is one of the most important items in this department. It is fashionable in some circles to vary the color and shape of the different course plates as much as possible, and as

most of them are of choice ware, the custom of examining the marks and discussing the relative merits of various makes, as well as coming or possible changes, adds not a little to the interest of the table talk.

Cups and saucers are shown in infinite variety of shape, color and design. The bowl shaped cup is preferred by many of the best authorities, while others chose those that have almost straight sides. Especial attention is given to after dinner coffee cups. They are to be found in almost every imaginable shape, and with all sorts of quaint and fanciful suggestions in form and decoration. Shell shaped saucers have cups following the idea of the shell as nearly as possible, the handles being in the form of smaller shelves of various sorts. A popular handle is a pair of butterfly wings very slightly spread. Bronzed handles are popular, and although not a novelty, are seen upon some of the finest of the new designs. Some handles appear like forked or irregular branches of trees. They are cut squarely off, having little projecting twigs, very odd looking and pretty. There are also cups and saucers with raised enamel, and fine vine patterns that are among the most popular of the current styles. This relief work, however, is seriously objected to by sensitive persons, as the contact of spoon or fork with an uneven surface is thought to be somewhat trying to people of delicate nerves. Such persons will do well to select dishes that show relief only on the edges or the outside.

Salad sets are brought out both in square and oblong square shapes, the plates in either being perfectly square or round, according to fancy, or square, with a small portion of each corner cut off. Other styles are oblong or half deep with round or octagon plates. The styles in fruit or berry sets number scores, each one rivaling the other in beauty of form, pattern, and quality of decoration. Special attention seems to have been given to this department of table ware, and with the happiest results. Some housekeepers disregard all ideas of matching in these sets, and select a large, deep bowl of fine cut glass, with some of the choice fancy wares. There are shell porcelain dishes for serving the fruit that are extremely pretty with these cut glass bowls. They are made with raised patterns, and appear as though set with jewels, so brilliant are the colorings of the flowers and foliage. Ice cream sets are somewhat more conventional in shape. As cream is frequently sent to the table in long bars, an oblong dish or platter is most convenient for the purpose. The plates may be either square, round or of fanciful form, or fancy glass dishes may be used with equal propriety. With the present wealth of design and shape, the artistic householder can scarcely go wrong selecting from the standard makers of fine china, and if her taste is cultivated, her table may be as perfect, judged by an artistic standard, as her means will allow.

In the way of odd pieces there is almost endless variety. Special dishes with characteristic decorations are furnished for almost every article of food. Bread plates have a design of a folded napkin laid across the middle. Asparagus dishes look like the stalks of the plant either in wicker work design or in the form of one half of a large bunch of the vegetable as it appears in market. There are baskets for rolls, covered dishes for cheese, egg dishes, long, slender celery boats, sardine dishes with attached or independent trays, according to taste. Platters have metal points upon which the game or roast may be impaled, for the convenience of inexperienced or careless carvers, and the absolute destruction of carving knives.

There are very attractive pudding dishes with metal baking dishes to place inside. Some of the new styles in fine ware are peculiarly attractive and unique in form and decoration.

Dishes for sauces are shown in various shapes. Those designed for the fish course are made in the shape of a fish, with one side hollowed out and the tail turned upward for a handle. Regular gravy and sauce tureens and boats are made with attached or separate trays. Some of them have china ladles, but they are so fragile that nearly all housekeepers must resort to silver ladles sooner or latter, and the demand for those of china are decreasing.

There are few novel features in the extensive and varied stock of cracker jars, oatmeal sets, oyster dishes and bone plates. The latter are larger than those that were first brought out, and there is such a steady and growing demand for them that they bid fair to become a part of the regular dinner-service.



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